

The Mirror

OF

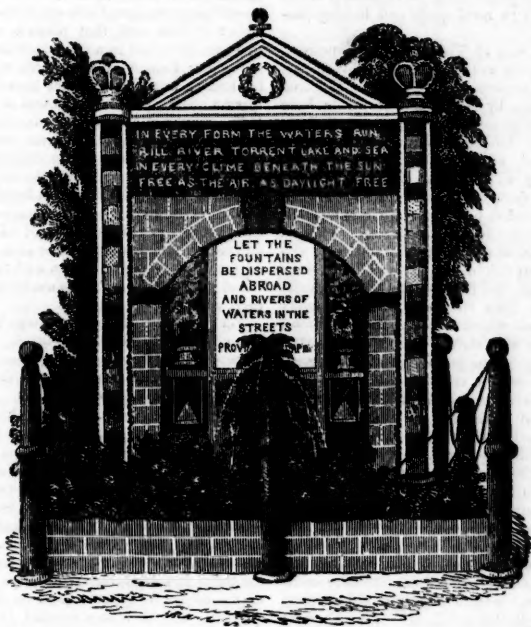
LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

No. 834.]

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1837.

[PRICE 2d.]

WELL-FLOWERING IN DERBYSHIRE.



WELL AT TISSINGTON.

[A notice of this very interesting custom, as observed in the year 1833, occurs in the twenty-first volume of this Miscellany, (page 358); but the following communication invests the subject with additional interest, from the sketcher of the above Engraving having witnessed the Festival last year, and contributed more minute details than we have hitherto published.]

"Still Dove-dale yield thy flowers to deck the fountains
Of Tissington upon its holyday;
The customs long preserved among the mountains
Should not be lightly left to pass away.
They have their moral; and we often may
Learn from them how our wise forefathers wrought,
When they upon the public mind would lay
Some weighty principle, some maxim brought
Home to their hearts, the healthful product of deep thought."

So sings the Derbyshire poet, John Edwards, in his descriptive *Tour of the Dove*, in relation to one of the most delightful old customs at present remaining in England; whether we consider it in connexion with the usages of

what are styled "classical" times, or merely value it for its own picturesque beauty.

But, no one need wish for a better introductory description than that already given by that zealous chronicler of Derbyshire beauties—Rhodes, in his *Peak Scenery*. He says:—"An ancient custom still prevails in the village of Tissington, to which indeed it appears to be confined, for I have not met with anything of a similar description in any other part of Derbyshire. It is denominated *Well-flowering*, and Holy Thursday is devoted to the rites and ceremonies of this elegant custom. This day is regarded as a festival; and all the wells in the place, five in number, are decorated with wreaths and garlands of newly-gathered flowers, disposed in various devices." On this occasion the villagers put on their best attire, and open their houses to their friends. There is service in the church, where a sermon is preached; afterwards a

procession takes place, and the wells are visited in succession; the psalms for the day, the epistle and gospel are read, one at each well; and the whole concludes with a hymn which is sung by the church singers, and accompanied by a band of music. This done, they separate, and the remainder of the day is spent in rural sports and holiday pastimes.

When I was at Tissington last summer, I made inquiry as to the origin of this, to me, intensely interesting custom. But the true record seems, by the lapse of time, to have lost much of its minutiae; and all they tell you now is that tradition affirms, at a very remote period, when the inhabitants of the surrounding villages were suffering all the horrors of drought, the wells at Tissington, (then a secluded hollow among uncultivated hills,) were happily discovered; and in grateful remembrance of so providential a supply, the joyful country folks decorated their *life-springs* with garlands and flowers, and annually celebrated this, then the only, place for many miles around, which supplied the neighbouring villages with water. The want of detail in this story, is one proof, to me, of its great antiquity; and the circumstance might have happened in times, or within the memory of times, when wells and streams were held sacred. In other words, soon after the Roman period in Britain,—for they, it is well known, had their *Fontinalia*, a religious observance dedicated to the nymphs of wells and fountains, the principal ceremonies of which were the strewing of flowers on the stream, and decorating the wells with garlands. "Where a spring rises or a river flows," says Seneca, "there should we build altars and offer sacrifices." Indeed, the antiquity of this elegant custom might be supported by many such authorities; for, it had its origin in times long anterior to Christianity.

An eye-witness of the Well-dressing at Tissington in 1817, has thus described their appearance, in a paper published in Mr. Brayley's *Graphic and Historical Illustrations*:—"The principal well, called St. Helen's well, is opposite Sir Henry Fitzherbert's house.* The water flows from a very large stone basin into two smaller ones, and thence flows down the road. This well has a large stone alcove over it, around which there was a very broad border of laurel leaves, edged with a vandyked one of purple field-flowers, fringed with yellow daisies and other flowers. In the front, two large pillars, covered with a net-work of ivy and moss, studded with tulips, supported the Fitzherbert arms. The ground-work was a board, covered with moist clay, to receive the stems of the flowers,

* Tissington is the seat of the Fitzherbert family, and the old mansion, with its massy wall and gate, its old bow windows, and carved stone-work, stand opposite the little embowered church, and form an interesting feature in the quiet street of the village.

but the clay was entirely hidden: the arms were in their proper colours, the Latin motto formed of fir-apples. At the top of the arms were the words "Ask and ye shall receive," in large capital letters formed of *pensees*, the whole being surmounted by G. R. and a crown. The effect at a distance was very beautiful; it appeared like embroidery." He adds:—"The well that pleased me most, was one that stood in a retired garden; it had an arbour formed of trees with wreaths of laburnum, and the common blue hare-bells thrown all over; at the top was a figure of Pity, (holding a medallion of the King,) bending to Hygeia, with her accustomed offering of foxgloves. The drapery of the figures defied all description, the colours were so well chosen. On the right hand of Pity was a globe most exquisitely designed; upon one part you might see the word 'England'; on the left a ship with all her sails hoisted: on the figure were the crown and the words, 'God save the King,' in sweet-briar leaves upon a ground of lilacs."

For many weeks before Holy Thursday, (which this year happened May 4,) the inhabitants are busily employed gathering moss, flowers, &c., and arranging the frame-work for their forthcoming festival. Indeed, throughout the year they are thinking of new designs and arrangements, concerning which the most profound secrecy is observed among the half-dozen or more who determine to dress their own appropriated well. That it is a work of time and reflection is apparent, when we come to consider the antiquity of the custom, the many previous patterns, and the wish to procure new and striking designs, as the floral holiday attracts immense numbers to the otherwise quiet village on the day in question, and is looked forward to with anxiety by all Derbyshire folks; as it is one of the old customs of England that, unlike others, seems to strengthen rather than decline by age,—a circumstance highly creditable to the taste of the people, and gratifying to every lover of pastoral beauty, which in this instance shines forth superior to any other old country custom; the may-pole itself not excluded.

The Engraving at the head of the article, represents one of these wells, or "taps," as they are provincially termed. It was sketched on the festival (May 12, 1836,) by a young friend, who visited the floral *fête*, and who was, like myself, enthusiastic on the subject; but, notwithstanding his anticipations of the scene, he confessed that "it exceeded in beauty anything that can be said in praise of it," a circumstance that seldom happens in our matter-of-fact times, when the simple elegancies of life are driven out of sight by fashionable and affected imitation of nature on one hand, and the gloomy mammon of trade on the other.

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The beauty of the well represented by the Engraving, (which is the first that has ever been "in print,") cannot be fully appreciated by a mere glance, unless the reader is made fully aware of the labour bestowed on it, which is more than any casual observer would give credit for. The whole front of the building, pillars, brick-work, inscriptions, those parts left white in the cut, or those tinted, were all formed of flowers, and stood about eight feet in height, by five in breadth. It was the design of a female, and occupied her more than a week, although assisted by five other persons, some working by night as the others did by day. The inscriptions in this instance seemed to me to be particularly well chosen; the bountiful supply indicated by the poetical description was, in phrase, extremely pleasing, while the extract from the Proverbs in the centre, in its profuse benevolence could only be fully appreciated by combining it, in idea, with a parching eastern clime, in allusion to which it was spoken.

If the reader will again look at the Cut, and follow me in description, I think as accurate an idea of the original may be had as it is in this instance practicable to obtain. The upper triangular portion, represented as white, was formed of buttercups and cowslips, bordered with moss, and the wreath of laurel leaves. The inscription immediately under it ("In every form," &c.) was formed of holly-berries, on a ground of blue hare-bells. The pillars at the sides had alternate square patches of blue, red, and yellow flowers from top to bottom; while the arched front was made to represent brick-work, being a solid mass of red daisies, with the white lines marking the courses of the layers, formed of wood emery. The inscription within the recess had a white ground of daisies, the letters were formed of the blue-bell petals, the vases, blue, red, and yellow, of different flowers, were on a ground of bright green moss. In front were posts and chains, also covered with moss; and the low wall bounding the whole was formed also of flowers, disposed in the same manner as the imitation brick-work above. This inclosed plants and flowers; and the small central bush was so arranged over the well that the water was conveyed through small pipes that passed down each pendulous branch, and a unique fountain was the result, seeming to spout forth from the leaves of the living tree. The sides of the building, (if I may so term it,) were supported by bunches of holly and laburnum, and thus was completed the picturesque design.

The celebrity of the Tissington Well-flowering has been the means of exciting the inhabitants of Wirksworth to get up a similar festival; and they have succeeded in attracting an almost equal share of admiration. They have not, however, the experience of

the original well-dressers, for this festival is but of two or three years standing. Every good wish, however, belongs to it, and all concerned in such a means of improving good taste and good feeling. Many of the designs are meritorious from their beauty and ingenuity; and the characteristic English hospitality observed towards all visitors on the day in question, gives an additional zest to the scene, and leads to a hope that the times past may yet find a prototype in the present and the future. All such festivals having such good ends in view should be strenuously upheld by every lover of his "father-land," and while such exist in Derbyshire,

This custom long preserved among the mountains
Will ne'er be lightly left to pass away.

F. W. FAIRHOLT.

ELEGY AND EULOGY ON TWO RIVAL WATCHES.

Hark lieth one whose chief besetting sin
Was lying, tho' he'd neither tongue nor chin;
Consume falsehood bubbled, without rest,
From springs, all lying 'neath his brassy breast.

That one who had no tongue from truth should
swerve
Sounds somewhat strange—but who has felt'd t'ob-
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That words, tho' true, may be in fact a lie,
As falsehoods may be uttered guileless;
Whate'er is said, whate'er one may believe,
Lying is but *th' intention to deceive*.

The "Chinless" told, that is, profess'd to tell,
To those who had not means to know so well,
The course of Time along life's changeful road;
Yet rarely he time's real progress show'd;
For when inquirers information sought,
His lying hands, with ready falsehood fraught,
To some delusive spot would ever point;
Inherent vice impelling every joint—
That awful chasm, erst call'd his mouth, the while,
Grinning most horribly a ghastly smile,
In woe or woe some symptoms might be seen,
Of sluggish movement or deceptive mien;—
Whene'er in woe, he onward cease'd to jog,
And when in woe, he ever was in-cog.

His rival's outward form was not refined,
Nor quite a perfect sample of his kind,
Having in early life receiv'd some bumps,
Which had reduc'd his honest hands to stumps.
Full on his face he once receiv'd a "whopper,"
Which maul'd on his cheek a blush of copper;
But never, o'er his modest face did pass
The slightest tinge of truth-despising brass.
He sought not fame through beauty, rank, or birth,
But was distinguished by his innate worth:—
Like a good ship, since he was first on sale,
Gave him a proper wind, he'd never fail.
'Tis true the envious, in their deep chagrin,
Vented, in bitter bursts, invidious spleen;
But when was sterling merit wholly free
From the false tongue of foul-mouth'd calumny?
Oft would the glorious sun his face reveal,
Yet envious clouds th' effulgent rays conceal—
The purest flake of snow the heavens give birth,
Lives but to mingle with polluting earth.
Maugre the pow'r the earth or vapour hath,
The snow descends, the sun still glids our path.
So "Stumpy," 'mid his taunts, and jeers, and bumps,
Still onward willing was th' unwearied stumps!

But let me now, with serious grief, relate
The fearful climax of the "Chinless" fate.
Losing his own, he fell o'er ruin's verge,
His downward course a thousand traumas urge;

• The lower part of his face was effaced.

tence to describe them;—and believe [modest Peter!] that Cicero or Virgil would labour in vain.

[From an entertaining paper on Ancient Collections of Private Letters, illustrating the manners of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; in the *Quarterly Review*, just published.]

New Books.

LOCKHART'S LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

VOL. II.

[THE continuation of this delightful work abounds in interesting details of Scott's literary life—his comprehensive projects, and brilliant successes. The present volume opens with the poet's removal to Ashiestiel in 1804, and progresses to his purchase of Abbotsford, in 1811. The products of the interval were the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; the edition of *Dryden*; *Marmion*; the edition of *Swift*; *The Lady of the Lake*; the commencement of *Waverley*; *The Lord of the Isles*; *Rokeby*, &c. The correspondence with Miss Seward, Joanna Baillie, Ellis, Wordsworth, Southey, and Byron, is not the least attractive portion of this volume, and a very pleasing relief to the business' details of the Ballantynes and the imperial publisher, Archibald Constable. Our selections are miscellaneous.]

Ashiestiel.

Ashiestiel will be visited by many for Scott's sake, as long as *Waverley* and *Marmion* are remembered. A more beautiful situation for the residence of a poet could not be conceived. The house was then a small one, but, compared with the cottage at Lasswade, its accommodations were amply sufficient. You approached it through an old-fashioned garden, with holly hedges, and broad, green, terrace walks. On one side, close under the windows, is a deep ravine, clothed with venerable trees, down which a mountain rivulet is heard, more than seen, in its progress to the Tweed. The river itself is separated from the high bank on which the house stands only by a narrow meadow of the richest verdure. Opposite, and all around, are the green hills. The valley there is narrow, and the aspect in every direction is that of perfect pastoral repose. The heights immediately behind are those which divide the Tweed from the Yarrow; and the latter celebrated stream lies within an easy ride, in the course of which the traveller passes through a variety of the finest mountain scenery in the south of Scotland. No town is within seven miles, but Selkirk, which was then still smaller and quieter than it is now; there was hardly even a gentleman's family within visiting distance, except at Yair, a few miles lower on the Tweed, the ancient seat

of the Pringles of Whytbank, and at Bowhill, between the Yarrow and the Ettrick, where the Earl of Dalkeith used occasionally to inhabit a small shooting lodge, which has since grown to be a magnificent ducal residence. The country all around, with here and there an insignificant exception, belongs to the Buccleuch estate; so that, whichever way he choose to turn, the bard of the clan had ample room, and verge enough, and all appliances to boot, for every variety of field sport that might happen to please his fancy; and being then in the prime vigour of manhood, he was not slow to profit by these advantages. Meantime, the concerns of his own little farm, and the care of his absent relation's woods, gave him healthful occupation in the intervals of the chase; and he had long, solitary evenings for the uninterrupted exercise of his pen; perhaps, on the whole, better opportunities of study than he had ever enjoyed before, or was to meet with elsewhere in later days.

Scott's Distribution of Time.

In 1805, Mr. Skene soon discovered an important change which had recently been made in his friend's distribution of his time. Previously it had been his custom, whenever professional business or social engagements occupied the middle part of his day, to seize some hours for study after he was supposed to have retired to bed. His physician suggested that this was very likely to aggravate his nervous headaches, the only malady he was subject to in the prime of his manhood; and, contemplating with steady eye a course not only of unremitting, but of increasing industry, he resolved to reverse his plan, and carried his purpose into execution with unflinching energy. In short, he had now adopted the habits in which, with very slender variation, he ever after persevered when in the country. He rose by five o'clock, lit his own fire when the season required one, and shaved and dressed with great deliberation—for he was a very martinet as to all but the mere coxcombs of the toilet, not abhorring effeminate dandyism itself so cordially as the slightest approach to personal slovenliness, or even those "bed-gown and slipper tricks," as he called them, in which literary men are so apt to indulge. Arrayed in his shooting-jacket, or whatever dress he meant to use till dinner time, he was seated at his desk by six o'clock, all his papers arranged before him in the most accurate order, and his books of reference marshalled around him on the floor, while at least one favourite dog lay watching his eye just beyond the line of circumspection. Thus, by the time the family assembled for breakfast, between nine and ten, he had done enough (in his own language) "to break the neck of the day's

work." After breakfast a couple of hours more were given to his solitary tasks, and by noon he was, as he used to say, "his own man." When the weather was bad he would labour incessantly all the morning; but the general rule was to be out and on horseback by one o'clock at the latest; while, if any more distant excursion had been proposed over night, he was ready to start on it by ten; his occasional rainy days of unintermitted study forming, as he said, a fund in his favour, out of which he was entitled to draw for accommodation whenever the sun shone with special brightness.

It was another rule that every letter he received should be answered that same day. Nothing else could have enabled him to keep abreast with the flood of communications that in the sequel put his good nature to the severest test—but already the demands on him in this way also were numerous; and he included attention to them among the necessary business which must be despatched before he had a right to close his writing-box, or as he phrased it, "to any out damned spot, and be a gentleman." In turning over his enormous mass of correspondence, I have almost invariably found some indication that, when a letter had remained more than a day or two unanswered, it had been so because he found occasion for inquiry or deliberate consideration.

Scott and Caroline, Princess of Wales.

Caroline, Princess of Wales, was in those days considered among the Tories, whose politics her husband had uniformly opposed, as the victim of unmerited misfortune, cast aside, from the mere wantonness of caprice, by a gay and dissolute voluptuary; while the Prince's Whig associates had espoused his quarrel, and were already, as the event showed, prepared to act, publicly as well as privately, as if they believed her to be among the most abandoned of her sex. I know not by whom Scott was first introduced to her little Court at Blackheath; but I think it was probably through Mrs. Hayman, a lady of her bed-chamber, several of whose notes and letters occur about this time in the collection of his correspondence. The careless levity of the Princess's manner was observed by him, as I have heard him say, with much regret, as likely to bring the purity of heart and mind, for which he gave her credit, into suspicion. For example, when, in the course of the evening, she conducted him by herself to admire some flowers in a conservatory, and, the place being rather dark, his lameness occasioned him to hesitate for a moment in following her down some steps which she had taken at a skip, she turned round, and said, with mock indignation, "Ah! false and faint-

heart troubadour! you will not trust yourself with me for fear of your neck!"

I find from one of Mrs. Hayman's letters, that on being asked, at Montague House, to recite some verses of his own, he replied that he had none unpublished which he thought worthy of her Royal Highness's attention, but introduced a short account of the Ettrick Shepherd, and repeated one of the ballads of the *Mountain Bard*, for which he was then endeavouring to procure subscribers. The Princess appears to have been interested by the story, and she affected, at all events, to be pleased with the lines; she desired that her name might be placed on the Shepherd's list, and thus he had at least one gleam of royal patronage.

Marmion.

Marmion was first printed in a splendid quarto, price one guinea and a half. The 2,000 copies of this edition were all disposed of in less than a month, when a second of 3,000 copies, in 8vo., was sent to press. There followed a third and a fourth edition, each of 3,000, in 1809; a fifth of 2,000, early in 1810; and a sixth of 3,000, in two volumes, crown 8vo., with twelve designs by Singleton, before the end of that year; a seventh of 4,000, and an eighth of 5,000 copies 8vo., in 1811; a ninth of 3,000 in 1815; a tenth of 500, in 1820; an eleventh of 500, and a twelfth of 2,000 copies, in foolscap, both in 1825. The legitimate sale in this country, therefore, down to the time of its being included in the first collective edition of his poetical works, amounted to 31,000; and the aggregate of that sale down to the period at which I am writing (May, 1836), may be stated at 50,000 copies. I presume it is right for me to facilitate the task of future historians of our literature by preserving these details as often as I can. Such particulars respecting many of the great works even of the last century, are already sought for with vain regret; and I anticipate no day when the student of English civilization will pass without curiosity the contemporary reception of the *Tale of Flodden Field*.

Scott's Domestic Life.

Of the irregularity of his own education he speaks with considerable regret, in the autobiographical fragment written this year at Ashestiel; yet his practice does not look as if that feeling had been strongly rooted in his mind;—for he never did show much concern about regulating systematically what is usually called education in the case of his own children. It seemed, on the contrary, as if he attached little importance to any thing else, so he could perceive that the young curiosity was excited—the intellect, by whatever springs of interest, set in

motion. He detested and despised the whole generation of modern children's books, in which the attempt is made to convey accurate notions of scientific minutiae: delighting cordially, on the other hand, in those of the preceding age, which, addressing themselves chiefly to the imagination, obtain through it, as he believed, the best chance of stirring our graver faculties also. He exercised the memory, by selecting for tasks of recitation passages of popular verse the most likely to catch the fancy of children; and gradually familiarized them with the ancient history of their own country, by arresting attention, in the course of his own oral narrations, on incidents and characters of a similar description. Nor did he neglect to use the same means of quickening curiosity as to the events of sacred history. On Sunday he never rode—at least not until his growing infirmity made his pony almost necessary to him—for it was his principle that all domestic animals have a full right to their Sabbath of rest; but after he had read the church service, he usually walked with his whole family, dogs included, to some favourite spot at a considerable distance from the house—most frequently the ruined tower of Elibank—and there dined with them in the open air on a basket of cold provisions, mixing his wine with the water of the brook beside which they all were grouped around him on the turf; and here, or at home, if the weather kept them from their ramble, his Sunday talk was just such a series of biblical lessons as that which we have preserved for the permanent use of rising generations, in his *Tales of a Grandfather*, on the early history of Scotland. I wish he had committed that other series to writing to;—how different that would have been from our thousand compilations of dead epitome and imbecile cant! He had his Bible, the New Testament especially, by heart; and on these days inwove the simple pathos or sublime enthusiasm of Scripture, in whatever story he was telling, with the same picturesque richness as he did, in his week-day tales, the quaint Scotch of Pitcottie, or some rude, romantic, old rhyme from Barbour's Bruce, or Blind Harry's Wallace.

By many external accomplishments, either in girl or boy, he set little store. He delighted to hear his daughters sing an old ditty, or one of his own framing; but, so the singer appeared to feel the spirit of her ballad, he was not at all critical of the technical execution. There was one thing, however, on which he fixed his heart hardly less than the ancient Persians of the *Cyropædia*; like them, next to love of truth, he held love of horsemanship for the prime point of education. As soon as his eldest girl could sit a pony, she was made the regular attendant of his mountain rides; and

they all, as they attained sufficient strength, had the like advancement. He taught them to think nothing of tumbles, and habituated them to his own reckless delight in perilous fords and flooded streams; and they all imbibed in great perfection his passion for horses—as well, I may venture to add, as his deep reverence for the more important article of that Persian training. "Without courage," he said, "there cannot be truth; and without truth there can be no other virtue."

He had a horror of boarding-schools; never allowed his girls to learn any thing out of his own house; and chose their governess—(Miss Miller)—who about this time was domesticated with them, and never left them while they needed one,—with far greater regard to her kind, good temper and excellent moral and religious principles, than to the measure of her attainments in what are called fashionable accomplishments. The admirable system of education for boys in Scotland combines all the advantages of public and private instruction; his carried their satchels to the High-School, when the family was in Edinburgh, just as he had done before them, and shared of course the evening society of their happy home. But he rarely, if ever, left them in town, when he could himself be in the country; and at Ashestiel he was, for better or for worse, his eldest boy's daily tutor, after he began Latin.

Scott's Theatrical Acquaintance.

He had from his boyish days a great love for theatrical representation; and so soon as circumstances enabled him to practise extended hospitality, the chief actors of his time, whenever they happened to be in Scotland, were among the most acceptable of his guests. Mr. Charles Young was, I believe, the first of them of whom he saw much. As early as 1803, I find him writing of that gentleman to the Marchioness of Abercorn as a valuable addition to the society of Edinburgh; and down to the end of Scott's life Mr. Young was never in the north without visiting him.

Another graceful and intelligent performer in whom he took a special interest, and of whom he saw a great deal in his private circle, was Miss Smith, afterwards Mrs. Bartley. But at the period of which I am now treating, his principal theatrical intimacy was with John Philip Kemble, and his sister Mrs. Siddons, both of whom he appears to have often met at Lord Abercorn's villa near Stanmore, during his spring visits to London after the first establishment of his poetical celebrity. Of John Kemble's personal character and manners, he has recorded his impressions in a pleasing review of Mr. Boaden's *Memoir*. The great tragedian's love of black-letter

learning, especially of dramatic antiquities, afforded a strong bond of fellowship; and I have heard Scott say that the only man who ever seduced him into very deep potations in his middle life was Kemble. He was frequently at Ashestiel, and the "fat Scotch butler," whom Mr. Skene has described to us, by name *John Macbeth*, made sore complaints of the bad hours kept on such occasions in one of the most regular of households: but the watchings of the night were not more grievous to "Cousin Macbeth," as Kemble called the honest *beaufettier*, than were the hazards and fatigues of the morning to the representative of the Scotch usurper. Kemble's miseries during a rough gallop were quite as grotesque as those of his namesake, and it must be owned that species of distress was one from the contemplation of which his host could never derive any thing but amusement.

(To be continued.)

THE METROPOLITAN BENEFIT SOCIETIES' ASYLUM, BALL'S POND ROAD.

THIS "happy port and haven" is now in course of erection from the design of Mr. S. H. Ridley, architect. It is intended as a comfortable home for a limited number of aged and infirm members of Benefit Societies. The Institution from whence this excellent object emanates, was established in the year 1829; from which period to the present time, fifty individuals have been rendered comparatively happy beneath its fostering care,

who, but for this Society, "must have sunk under the chilling blast of poverty, or been necessitated to enter that place so repulsive to an independent mind, the parish work-house."

The committee, in their prospectus, appeal to the opulent on behalf of the members of Benefit Societies as a class of persons, whose prudent habits are fully proved by their connexion with those Institutions; they likewise urge their claims both in consideration of the relief afforded by those societies in lessening the poor-rates, and for the mutual support the members render to each other in time of sickness, old age, or death. They likewise appeal to the members of Benefit Societies, whose circumstances will allow them to spare a portion of their income to assist their destitute brother members.

Up to a recent date, houses had been rented for the purposes of the Institution; and, it is gratifying to find it reported that the progressive increase of its funds has enabled its managers to purchase a freehold plot of ground in Ball's Pond Road, whereon has been commenced the building represented in the annexed Engraving. It will be in the picturesque old English style of architecture, with its sheltering porches, embayed windows, and embellished gables, harmonising most happily with the social comfort of English life and character. The whole building, when finished, will be calculated to accommodate sixty-four aged couples; but, inadequacy of funds precludes the completion of the design forthwith. Indeed, the committee



(The Metropolitan Benefit Societies' Asylum.)

are now urging their brother members to lend their assistance to finish the portion of the building in progress; and, as there are upwards of 12,000 members in the metropolis and its environs, we trust this very desirable object will not long remain unaccomplished. The subscriptions to the Institution are upon the same scale as those of pension societies generally; and, when its excellent object becomes better known among the higher classes, who are ever "ready to distribute," and rightly understood by the members of Benefit Societies, the prosperity of this Metropolitan Asylum will soon become secure.

The Public Journals.

OLIVER TWIST "RUNS AWAY."
By Box.

It was not until he was left alone in the silence and stillness of the gloomy workshop of the undertaker, that Oliver gave way to the feelings which the day's treatment may be supposed likely to have awakened in a mere child. He had listened to taunts with a look of dogged contempt; he had born the lash without a cry, for he felt that pride swelling in his heart which would have kept down a shriek to the last, if they had roasted him alive. But, now that there were none to see or hear him, he fell upon his knees on the floor, and, hiding his face in his hands wept such tears as God send, for the credit of our nature, few so young may ever have cause to pour out before him.

For a long time Oliver remained motionless in this attitude. The candle was burning low in the socket when he rose to his feet, and having gazed cautiously round him, and listened intently, gently undid the fastenings of the door and looked abroad.

It was a cold, dark night. The stars seemed to the boy's eyes further from the earth than he had ever seen them before; there was no wind, and the sombre shadows thrown by the trees on the earth looked sepulchral and death-like, from being so still. He softly relocked the door, and, having availed himself of the expiring light of the candle to tie up in a handkerchief the few articles of wearing apparel he had, set himself down upon a bench to wait for morning.

With the first ray of light that struggled through the crevices in the shutters Oliver rose, and again unbarred the door. One timid look around,—one moment's pause of hesitation,—he had closed it behind him, and was in the open street.

He looked to the right and to the left, uncertain whither to fly. He remembered to have seen the wagons as they went out, toiling up the hill; he took the same route, and arriving at a footpath across the fields, which he thought after some distance led

out again into the road, struck into it, and walked quickly on.

Along this same footpath, Oliver well remembered he had trotted beside Mr. Bumble, when he first carried him to the workhouse from the farm. His way lay directly in front of the cottage. His heart beat quickly when he bethought himself of this, and he half resolved to turn back. He had come a long way though, and should lose a great deal of time by doing so. Besides, it was so early that there was very little fear of his being seen; so he walked on.

He reached the house. There was no appearance of its inmates stirring at that early hour. Oliver stopped, and peeped into the garden. A child was weeding one of the little beds; and, as he stopped, he raised his pale face, and disclosed the features of one of his former companions. Oliver felt glad to see him before he went, for, though younger than himself, he had been his little friend and playmate; they had been beaten, and starved, and shut up together, many and many a time.

"Hush, Dick," said Oliver, as the boy ran to the gate, and thrust his thin arm between the rails to greet him. "Is any one up?"

"Nobody but me," replied the child.

"You mustn't say, you saw me, Dick," said Oliver; "I am running away. They beat and ill-use me, Dick; and I am going to seek my fortune some long way off, I don't know where. How pale you are!"

"I heard the doctor tell them I was dying," replied the child with a faint smile. "I am very glad to see you, dear; but don't stop, don't stop."

"Yes, yes, I will, to say good-by to you," replied Oliver. "I shall see you again, Dick; I know I shall. You will be well and happy."

"I hope so," replied the child, "after I am dead, but not before. I know the doctor must be right, Oliver; because I dream so much of heaven, and angels, and kind faces that I never see when I am awake. Kiss me," said the child, climbing up the low gate, and flinging his little arms round Oliver's neck. "Good-by, dear! God bless you!"

The blessing was from a young child's lips, but it was the first that Oliver had ever heard invoked upon his head; and through all the struggles and sufferings of his after life, through all the troubles and changes of many weary years, he never once forgot it.

Oliver reached the stile at which the by-path terminated, and once more gained the high-road. It was eight o'clock now; and, though he was nearly five miles away from the town, he ran and hid behind the hedges by turns till noon, fearing that he might be

pursued and overtaken. Then he sat down to rest at the side of a mile-stone, and began to think for the first time where he had better go and try to live.

The stone by which he was seated, bore in large characters an intimation that it was just seventy miles from that spot to London. The name awakened a new train of ideas in the boy's mind. London!—that great, large place!—nobody—not even Mr. Bumble—could ever find him there. He had often heard the old men in the workhouse, too, say that no lad of spirit need want in London, and that there were ways of living in that vast city which those who had been bred up in country parts had no idea of. It was the very place for a homeless boy, who must die in the streets unless some one helped him. As these things passed through his thoughts, he jumped upon his feet, and again walked forward.

He had diminished the distance between himself and London by full four miles more, before he recollected how much he must undergo ere he could hope to reach his place of destination. As this consideration forced itself upon him, he slackened his pace a little, and meditated upon his means of getting there. He had a crust of bread, a coarse shirt, and two pairs of stockings in his bundle; and a penny—a gift of Sowerberry's after some funeral in which he had acquitted himself more than ordinarily well—in his pocket. "A clean shirt," thought Oliver, "is a very comfortable thing,—very; and so are two pairs of darned stockings, and so is a penny; but they are small helps to a sixty-five miles' walk in winter time." But Oliver's thoughts, like those of most other people, although they were extremely ready and active to point out his difficulties, were wholly at a loss to suggest any feasible mode of surmounting them; so, after a good deal of thinking to no particular purpose, he changed his little bundle over to the other shoulder, and trudged on.

Oliver walked twenty miles that day; and all that time tasted nothing but the crust of dry bread, and a few drafts of water which he begged at the cottage-doors by the roadside. When the night came, he turned into a meadow, and, creeping close under a haystack, determined to lie there till morning. He felt frightened at first, for the wind moaned dismally over the empty fields, and he was cold and hungry, and more alone than he had ever felt before. Being very tired with his walk, however, he soon fell asleep and forgot his troubles.

He felt cold and stiff when he got up next morning, and so hungry that he was obliged to exchange the penny for a small loaf in the very first village through which he passed. He had walked no more than twelve miles, when night closed in again;

for his feet were sore, and his legs so weak that they trembled beneath him. Another night passed in the bleak, damp air only made him worse; and, when he set forward on his journey next morning, he could hardly crawl along.

He waited at the bottom of a steep hill till a stage-coach came up, and then begged of the outside passengers; but there were very few who took any notice of him, and even those, told him to wait till they got to the top of the hill, and then let them see how far he could run for a halfpenny. Poor Oliver tried to keep up with the coach a little way, but was unable to do it, by reason of his fatigue and sore feet. When the out-sides saw this, they put their halfpence back into their pockets again, declaring that he was an idle young dog, and didn't deserve any thing; and the coach rattled away, and left only a cloud of dust behind.

In some villages, large painted boards were fixed up, warning all persons who begged within the district that they would be sent to jail which frightened Oliver very much, and made him very glad to get out of them with all possible expedition. In others he would stand about the inn-yards, and look mournfully at every one who passed; a proceeding which generally terminated in the landlady's ordering one of the post-boys who were lounging about, to drive that strange boy out of the place, for she was sure he had come to steal something. If he begged at a farmer's house, ten to one but they threatened to set the dog on him; and when he showed his nose in a shop, they talked about the beads, which brought Oliver's heart up into his mouth,—very often the only thing he had there, for many hours together.

In fact, if it had not been for a good-hearted turnpike-man, and a benevolent old lady, Oliver's troubles would have been shortened by the very same process which put an end to his mother's; in other words, he would most assuredly have fallen dead upon the king's highway. But the turnpike-man gave him a meal of bread and cheese; and the old lady, who had a shipwrecked grandson wandering barefooted in some distant part of the earth, took pity upon the poor orphan, and gave him what little she could afford—and more—with such kind and gentle words, and such tears of sympathy and compassion, that they sank deeper into Oliver's soul than all the sufferings he had ever undergone.

Early on the seventh morning after he had left his native place, Oliver limped slowly into the little town of Barnet. The window-shutters were closed, the street was empty, not a soul had awakened to the business of the day. The sun was rising in all his splendid beauty, but the light only seemed to show the boy his own lonesomeness and

desolation as he sat with bleeding feet and covered with dust upon a cold door-step.

By degrees the shutters were opened, the window-blinds were drawn up, and people began passing to and fro. Some few stopped to gaze at Oliver for a moment or two, or turned round to stare at him as they hurried by; but none relieved him, or troubled themselves to inquire how he came there. He had no heart to beg, and there he sat.—*Bentley's Miscellany.*

ROBBERIES IN OMNIBUSES.

GENIUS never dies. The invention of the omnibus for awhile paralyzed all the cut-purse system of London. The old prizes of petty larceny seemed to be snatched away at once. All the ancient maidens returning from the Bank on dividend days, with their little gains grasped as for life and death in their withered hands: all the old gentlemen who roamed the streets, too fond of a shilling to hire a hackney-coach, coming from their bankers: all the honest 'squires, come to London for the first time, full of wonder at every thing, and staring at the cross on St. Paul's, with their mouths and pockets alike wide open: the whole tribe of the natural prey of the light-fingered were suddenly carried off by the ill-omened omnibus. To be whirled along seven miles for sixpence was a temptation which none could resist, and the streets were left to the bustling persons who would knock down a pickpocket sooner than be pilfered; to the unfurnished persons from whom no ingenuity of finger could extract any thing, or to those well-clothed and grave persons in blue coats and lettered collars, whose eye reads a lesson of vigilance, and whose hands, white-gloved as they are, would have no hesitation in consigning the most exquisitely curled and perfumed pickpockets to the Poultry Compter.

At length a bright idea occurred. If men and women with purses will drive about the world in omnibuses, what is there in nature or art which shall forbid a pick-pocket to follow? The idea was reduced to practice, with an activity worthy of this age of intellect. Yet the system was not perfected at once. The first performers were females. Several dozens of remarkably mild, well-dressed, and well-looking young women were ordered on this service. Their only implements were softness, smiles, and a pair of remarkably sharp-pointed scissors. Their success was considerable. Many gentlemen, whose climacterical feelings might have defied captivity in any other shape, were rendered incautious by proximity during a run from the Bank to Charing-cross, or Chelsea; a fainting fit from the closeness of the vehicle, the rapidity of the motion, or any other satisfactory cause, increased the interest, until the fatal moment

when the omnibus made a pause, and the fair sufferer was fortunate enough to be able to get out and enjoy the fresh air. Then the old gentleman had leisure to recover his faculties, and feel for his spectacles, snuff-box, or purse, or for all three. The knowledge then flashed upon him, that "knowledge of good lost," which acts upon our organs of intelligence in the most disagreeable way of all. The fair absentee had cleared his pocket of its entire contents, and left him in return the moral lesson, "never to think more of a pair of eyes than of a pair of spectacles, nor value the softest sigh beyond the care of his pocket."

The next expedient contemplated a different order. The old ladies frequently found themselves seated beside some dapper fellow, from fifteen to five-and-twenty, with a hat a little thrown off the temples, a bunch of raven curls, which the improved fashion of the time, instead of sticking on the head with a comb, now sticks on the hat, a much more commodious contrivance; a remarkably large display of shirt with pearl studs; a figured velvet waistcoat; a slight bamboo in one hand, and three rings on the other; the usual allowance of whisker, mustache, and imperial being taken for granted, as matters without which no apprentice can ever pretend to be a man of fashion. What conceivable chance has any innocent creature of from fifty to seventy against the graces of a being thus equipped for the plunder of hearts, and every thing else that lies in his! A few civil words, a hint on the weather, the convenience of public carriages, any thing will lead one into communication when the heart begins to thaw—and the fixed frigidity of half a century is certainly difficult to be got over; yet assiduous attentions from a smiling youth, suddenly caught by the remaining interest of lips that well remember the triumphs of their better days, may do much; and they do enough if they keep the old lady's eyes off the active movement of the finger and thumb, that with the smallest knife in the world is severing the string of her reticule, insinuating its way into the bottom of her pocket, and soundlessly relieving it of the notes and shillings which form her last half-year's dividend; that done, the young admirer takes his leave, with the bow of an old friend, and awakes the lady, to her astonishment and horror on alighting from the coach, to discover that she is left sixpenceless! But the fair *must* be paid. The *conductor* has heard too many tales of sorrow in his time to listen to one now, peculiarly where he must pay the penalty himself; and unless the passengers have the gallantry to subscribe their pence a-piece, death or a jail are the only alternatives, credit being wholly out of the question. But the subscription is made, the lady is free once more, and she arrives at her cham-

ber only to register a new resolution against ever again trusting to the arts of man.

But all practice improves by time, and though Adam Smith panegyricizes the division of labour, the more philosophic pickpocket studies its combination. Both sexes are now employed at once. It is well known to be remarkably difficult to beat husband and wife at whist, and the inexperienced and presumptuous individual who indulges in any hope of the kind, is soon taught by his purse that the laws of nature are not to be infringed with impunity. The omnibus system is now connubial. A quiet and tolerably well-clothed man, with a woman of the same order and equipment, enter the omnibus together. They are obviously man and wife. They, however, contrive to take opposite sides. If the patient to be operated on is a gentleman, the wife gets ready her implements; if a lady, the husband is the performer. In the mean time the eye of the patient is fixed on some manœuvre of the party placed opposite. A scream at going down Holborn-hill; or a story of some recent breakdown; a narrative of a disastrous fire the night before; or the distress of both parents for a child seized with the influenza; any thing is enough to seize the yawning sympathies of a stage-coach. And the moment this is accomplished, the experiment begins. When it is completed, no time is lost, the retreat is made. The husband and wife descend quietly from the coach, move down the first lane that presents itself, divide the spoil in the first gin palace that glitters by the way, and then dissolve the connubial bond with the facility of radical legislation. Both are free, till some new adventure re-unites them.

The success of this new plan has been prodigious. It has thriven, to the terror of so many, that the entry into one of the popular omnibuses is now contemplated with some of the feeling of entering into a gipsy camp, the den of Cacus, or the Court of Chancery.

The consequence is, that the unlucky police-offices are occupied with the history and adventures of the various garments which have been cut up worse than the Christinos in the course of the last month. Some of the scenes produced by these displays must have singularly diversified the gravity of justice. A short time since an old lady, who had just lost her purse in an omnibus, came, full of female oratory, to complain before the magistrate. Her four petticoats, she protested, had been cut through. And, from the narrative, it should seem that she actually produced the four, with all their injuries on their heads. A happy parody of Antony's speech over Cæsar, "See what a rent the envious Casca made." Other garments, less honoured, have been produced by the suffering old

bachelors; and the fact is fully established, that the knife is so freely used, as to create wonder that severe wounds have not been inflicted. The beggar alone travels in safety. But this has been the case from the beginning of the world.—*Blackwood's Mag.*

Notes of a Reader.

DRAM-DRINKING.

[We find the subsequent information amidst some sensible *Observations on Retail Spirit Licenses*, addressed to Lord Melbourne, about three years since.]

Amongst the many objections to the retail spirit trade, is that of adulteration. In London, the competition in prices has most notoriously involved this fraud, as one source of profit. A London retailer set before me two glasses of gin at different prices, and asked me which was the stronger; I named one, which he informed me was much the weaker, and selling at the lower price, but stated it to be inverted with a *fictitious* strength, suited to the purchasers; as, to use his own words, "they prefer something that bites." Another, who had the credit of being "the cleverest man in the trade," once assured me he could so deceive the hydrometer, as to make adulterated spirit appear, by it, stronger than it really was; but he was eschequered for his ingenuity in some branch of his calling, and eventually died in prison. Another fraud is imposed by the construction of glasses used as measures. A man is said not to "understand his business," unless he can so fill, or rather omit to fill, the glass, that the scarcely apparent deficiency shall, on so large an area as that designed by the rim, be equal to a profit of fifteen per cent. In country towns, glasses are rarely used as measures, the smallest quantity being drawn into a metal measure, and then put into a glass capable of containing more than as much water. A tap or jug of cold water is always at hand: some add water, others drink the spirit first, and then (making wry faces), some water, as they say, "to take the taste out of my mouth." The Manchester dealers seriously assert their customers would detect the deficiency of a thimble-full, though not witnessed by the eye; their mouths are declared to be as decisive as the nicest measures, and, though it beggars my credulity, it is evidence of habitual "dram-drinking." They have, also, the reputation of being equally skilled in strengths. A leading house in Manchester boasted to me that they introduced the practice of selling gin at the highest legal strength, 17 u. p., rum at *over-proof*, and *French brandy at full-proof*; in quantities so small as three pennyworth—the ragged and barefooted frequently expending their last three-pence on this luxurious article, taxed with the enormous duty of 22s. 6d. per

gallon, a clear proof of the inefficiency of duty only. This is a competition very different from that of London; but equally bad, if not worse.

SODA WATER.

Or late years, persons who are accustomed to drink soda water to correct acidity of the stomach, have been much recommended to add to each glass a small portion of carbonate of soda. We have repeatedly adopted this plan, and have experienced real or imaginary relief from it; our authority being no less than Dr. Paris, of "Indigestion" celebrity. Up to a late period, Dr. Graham appears to have entertained a like opinion; but, last summer, the Doctor recanted, and he is "now fully persuaded, that so far from being an innocent medicine, which may be taken freely and frequently by any one who suffers from stomachic acidity or weakness, or from thirst, or heat in summer, it is one capable of doing serious injury to the stomach and the whole system, and ought, therefore, to be sparingly taken." The Doctor adds:—

"A dyspeptic stomach,—a stomach strongly and ordinarily disposed to form acid from its principal contents, is an enfeebled organ, and should be treated as such. Many professional men say soda, "in small doses, facilitates digestion, and restores in a very short time the functions of the stomach;" but this may be safely denied, if it is meant that it affords real relief. It may sometimes afford a spurious kind of help, but it does not facilitate digestion, or restore the functions of a depraved stomach. The benefit derived, if any, is like that obtained by persons in general from blood-letting prescribed to cure head-ache; it relieves them for the moment, to help the disorder to return with a two-fold or a ten-fold severity. Who, in his senses, would not deprecate such a relief?"

"Scarcely any medicine is more used now, or I should rather say abused, than this. Some of our best writers on *Materia Medica* assert it is not injurious, even in its continued use, and that the tonic powers of the carbonic acid, which is extricated in the stomach, prevents any unpleasant effects from the alkali; but this is mere supposition, and is contrary to fact. The carbonic acid inflates the stomach, which is not a likely way of invigorating it, and that it does more than this is not at all made out. The carbonate of soda has been asserted by others to be injurious, and some Physicians have thought it necessary to meet the change in the way just adverted to.

"Its first effect, if acid be present, is to relieve existing sensations of acidity, weight, and uneasiness in the stomach, which it does by neutralizing the acid, and thus removing an offending article; but its subsequent effect is *certainly and decidedly* that of a debilitating agent. In some instances, it will

afford very little present relief; and in many others, the patients, in attending to their sensations, find it sensibly disagree. Some persons cannot take it, even in beer, (to neutralize the acidity of which it is often used,) without feeling it to disagree; others, in whom it appears to agree very well in the beginning, have soon found its injurious tendency. For example, it has been felt so to weaken the stomach as to pave the way for the greater frequency of acidity there, and of head-ache, for which indeed it had been used as a remedy, and which for awhile it seemed to relieve; but the patient found, to his cost, the remedy was worse than the disease, inasmuch as other and better remedies could be found for the sickness and head-ache, but none could be found for them if the use of soda had been persisted in.

"A very respectable chemist in London, well known at the west end of town, brought himself into a deplorable state of health, before he was aware either of the cause of his symptoms, or the extent to which they tended; at length he found that his very free use of the carbonate of soda and soda water was the real source of his malady, and he has never failed, on proper occasions, to speak of their debilitating effects.

"These brief remarks are made with the hope that very many will be induced to abandon the injurious practice of taking soda and soda water freely. In full habits, where there is much strength, they may be occasionally taken with advantage, but scarcely in other less vigorous states of the constitution. I think soda ought never to be used in the teapot, and very seldom in beer."

THE HANDKERCHIEF.

The following article is translated from a French periodical:—"This appendage to the toilet has attained the highest degree of refinement. Anne of Austria was a princess so very delicate and *recherche* in all matters pertaining to her dress, and principally in her linen, that the Cardinal Mazarin said of her—"When she shall be in purgatory, doing penance for her sins, they will make her sleep in Holland sheets;" nevertheless, it appears from the memorial of the royal expenses under Louis XIII., that the queen's handkerchiefs only cost eighteen livres each. Luxury in the handkerchief made little progress under Marie Antoinette; her *mouchoirs* were valued but at twenty-four livres. From that period of the empire the progress was remarkable. Madame Campan relates that Napoleon one day playing with a handkerchief belonging to the empress, and examining with attention the delicate texture and embroidery, asked how much a handkerchief like that was worth.—"Sire," replied a lady of honour, "every *mouchoir* belonging to her

majesty costs eighty francs.'—'Eighty francs,' repeated the emperor, laughing; 'well, madam, carry one off with you every evening, it will be of more worth than your appointment.' Now-a-days, most of our *elegantes*, who are far enough from being empresses, have handkerchiefs worth two hundred francs. To the refinement of embroidery is added that of lace, which raises them to the most exorbitant price. We have seen a handkerchief worth four hundred francs. This species of luxury has its charms and also its inconveniences. It adds another important consideration to the thousand and one, that arrest the steps of some single man on the slippery threshold of Hymen. For it is an article which singularly adds to the amount of the items of the *corbeille*. I am acquainted with a person who, on the point of marrying, determined to do the thing handsomely. He was not to be daunted by the *robe d'Angletterre*, nor the velvet, nor the cashmere, nor the diamonds; but, when he came to the article handkerchief, he retreated fifteen paces within the stronghold of celibacy. Three dozen—six thousand two hundred francs! He remained a bachelor. With a handkerchief Voltaire has completed *Zaire*, and Alexander Dumas *Henry the Third*. There is many a domestic drama in these days that has much to do with rich pocket-handkerchiefs."

DECLINE AND FALL OF SERENADING.

A SERENATA, as explained by the great dictionary della Crusca, is that singing and playing lovers make by night *al sereno* before the houses of their ladies.

In former times, the practice was very general in Spain and Italy among the great and high-born. A serenata, indeed, was held to be an essential part of gallantry; and the towns of the south, during the beautiful nights of summer, were kept musical from midnight to day-dawn by amorous cavaliers. As all knights had not good voices, many of them employed vocalists; but during many ages the proudest of them thought it not beneath them to take a part in the concert. One of the earliest serenaders we read of in Italy was perhaps the loftiest of them all. This was Manfredi, son of the Emperor Frederick the Second, who afterwards became King of Naples and Sicily, and whose misfortunes were made immortal by the genius of Dante.

According to Matteo Spinelli, a chronicler of the thirteenth century, this accomplished prince, before he succeeded to the cares of a crown, resided a good deal at the pleasant town of Barletta, on the shores of the Adriatic sea; "and there it was his wont to stroll by night through the town, singing songs and ballads, and so he breathed the cool air, and with him there went two Sicilian musicians who were great makers of

ballads and romances."

We know not how it has happened, but the fact is obvious in Spain and Italy, that the practice, after a decline which commenced about the middle of the last century, has fallen into disuse and out of fashion with the upper classes, and is almost confined now to the lowest class.

At Venice, which used to take the lead, the chief serenaders now are barbers, and they rarely take the field, whilst

"Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier."

In Naples, where the exquisite moonlight nights inspire love with music, its most natural voice, if you hear a guitar in the streets, it is almost sure to be in the hands of an amorous coachman or sentimental barber. The style and execution of these minstrels rarely entitle them to a hearing; and, so far from meeting the respect paid in the olden time to serenaders, they are not unfrequently saluted from windows and house-tops in the same manner that Gil Blas was when going to serenade Donna Mergelina, "*on lui coiffa d'une casquette qui ne chatouillait point l'odorat*."

Le Sage, in making his hero learn to play the guitar of an old serving man as soon as he becomes a barber, would be perfectly in point and character now-a-days. The barbers of Naples use an instrument called a mandolina much more commonly than the guitar, which they call (we know not why) *la chitarra Francese*. The mandolina is smaller than the guitar; its strings are of wire and not of gut; and they are played upon, not by the fingers, but by a piece of wood or a quill. The notes of the instrument are sharp, tinkling, and disagreeable; and, though the taste of the upper classes is excellent, the popular music of the Neapolitans has little to recommend it.

At Rome, where the popular taste is better, very pretty street music is sometimes heard by night, and young mechanics and servants sing airs regularly distributed into parts with much feeling and ability. A modern traveller observes: "Here the serenade is a compliment of gallantry by no means confined to the rich. It is customary for a lover, even of the lowest class, to haunt the dwelling of his mistress, chanting a *rondo*, or roundelay, during the period of his courtship." But, in truth, this accomplished writer might have said that there too the compliment, instead of being monopolized by the rich was almost confined to the poor. He only recollects the serenades of mechanics, and during our own different

* "Spesso la notte esciva per Barletta cantando strambotti e canzoni ed ivi pigliando lo fresco, e con esso ivano due musicisti Siciliani che erano grandi romanzieri."

† Diary of an Invalid.

stays at Rome we seldom indeed heard street music by night from any other class. A Roman nobleman would no more think of thrumming the guitar under his mistress's window in the Corso or the Piazza di Spagna, than an English lord would of doing the like in Grosvenor-square.—*The Book of Table Talk.*

CLASSICAL EDUCATION:—THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

UTILITARIANISM is the order of the day; *In pretio pretium*. What is it to fetch in the market? Everything is to be gauged by and sacrificed to the result: and what result? The fine arts are to be encouraged, that the vulgar, the mechanical arts may prosper, and bring wealth: this is the canon by which everything elevated, everything noble, all beauty, all that is excellent is to be measured. True it is that navigation has been improved by astronomy, watch-making by the profound investigation of the laws of mechanics; Bramah's pump is the consequence and triumph of hydrostatical experiments; we search with less loss of time and labour for coal and other minerals since we have become geologists—and the country is groaning under railroads with the progress of metallurgy, a greater command of the powers of credit, and a deeper insight, as we are assured, into the principles of political economy. But Kepler, and Galileo, and Newton spent their laborious days, and their nightly oil, without thinking of these results; they were inspired with the pure love of science—with an ardent curiosity to learn, to know, and to instruct—and feeling that knowledge was power, they left the arts to find their own way; Davy was amongst the first of chemists, before he thought of inventing a safety-lamp, or of applying his philosophy to agriculture. So must we do now—spread a knowledge of what is good in art amongst your statesmen and legislators and the wealthy portion of the community, and the rest will instantly follow; and the more certainly, the less it is avowedly aimed at.

Our mode of instruction in the literature of the ancients is a case in point; though, within a few years there are, in some establishments, striking exceptions to the truth of the position, and there is a dawn of still greater improvements. But, in general, attention is exclusively bestowed, and at too early an age, on the difficulties of grammar, the niceties of criticism, and the laws of prosody; and much time is mispent in fruitless endeavours to teach the art or rather knack of composition in languages, which are no longer of any application for that purpose; and therefore, not only useless, but mischievous in its effect, from giving to the pupil the notion, that he is toiling for that which he will never be called upon to put to

account, and which, if he were to attempt, he would be laughed at for his penury. In the meantime, years roll on, and the youth has lost all feeling for the real beauties of the books he reads, because they are only put into his hands to teach him a knowledge of words, of long and short syllables, of accents, and the varieties of dialects. Though it cannot be denied that some history, some geography, some mythology are at the same time taught, these studies are too often treated as sub-servient to a knowledge purely of the language; and the one is so mixed up with the other, "the drilled dull lessons" form such a confusion in the young mind, that he becomes sick of the most beautiful works of man, before he has half got through them; and the natural consequence is, that he throws them away the moment he becomes his own master. We are too early accustomed to a familiarity with these beauties to feel a proper relish for them, and when we might relish them, they pall upon the appetite. Even Homer, the great legislator of the Greek mind, is neglected because too early taught. To learn the dead languages is certainly the first element of a gentleman's education, but how much better, how much easier would they be learnt, if they were taught, as we are taught living languages, and as the great learned of past days were taught—from simple books, from dialogues, from vocabularies, by interrogatories, prelections, in familiar conversation, by which, in a few short years, during which the accompaniments of this elementary education might also be attended to, and well imprinted upon the memory, such as history, &c.—the ordinary difficulties of a strange language would be conquered, a large command of words and inflections would be obtained, and the youth would gradually encounter the higher works, with ardent curiosity to become acquainted with their beauties—and with a sufficient stock of information to enable him to understand, and fully to appreciate them. As it is, how often does it happen, that whilst engaged in reading the sublime choruses of Æschylus, or the splendid periods of Demosthenes, or the nervous harangues and narratives of Thucydides, he is at once brought to a stop, because he does not know who was the father of Agamemnon, by what different principles Pericles and Cleon led the people of Athens, or the duties and liabilities of a Trierarch.

We learn from Vasari, in his life of Sansovino, that "the construction of the library of St. Mark at Venice, which had already in his time cost 150,000 ducats, was the signal for the nobles of that republic to improve their own private palaces; previous to this great work, their houses and palaces were all of one character; the same ornaments, the same proportions, and old fashioned, without

consulting the peculiarities of the site, or the purposes required; but after this time, the public and private houses were constructed upon new plans, and an improved arrangement; nor was money spared,—the Palazzo Cornaro alone cost 70,000 ducats." Ought we not, therefore, also to bear in mind, that the building which is now under consideration, and which is to be the most important in its destination, and the largest in size, of any which this island can boast, is to supply the means of transacting the legislative business of this vast empire, and will be daily and hourly frequented by the *élite* of our countrymen, in every class of society? What, even, it may ultimately become, it will be regarded as a part and parcel of the intellect of the age, as the model *par excellence*, the example in character, art, and decoration, of what is to come after. We ought to be aware, too, that there is a certain dependence of *manners* itself upon the public taste, and consequently, that if we give a wrong direction to this taste, the former will be equally led astray, and we may be unwittingly guilty of checking in their first budding the brightest and most aspiring gifts of nature. Let us then be more than usually careful of what this exemplar is to be. We are not only building for our own purposes, and for those of posterity, but we are professedly, by the very fact of opening a competition, proclaiming to the present and future ages, that our most accomplished and best-informed gentlemen have prescribed and judged what they thought to be the best, and that it was the best which our artists could execute. *Mr. Hamilton's Second Letter to the Earl of Elgin, on the New Houses of Parliament.*

The Gayerer.

Society.—Man is but a rough pebble without the attrition received from contact with the gentler sex: it is wonderful how the ladies pumice a man down into a smoothness which occasions him to roll over and over with the rest of the species, jostling but not wounding his neighbours, as the waves of circumstance bring him into collision with them.—*Captain Marryat.*

Abscess.—A morbid tumour, frequently growing above the shoulders, and swelling to a considerable size, when it comes to a head with nothing in it. It is not always a natural disease, for nature abhors a vacuum; yet fools, fops, and fanatics, are very subject to it, and it sometimes attacks old women of both sexes. "I wish to consult you upon a little project I have formed," said a noodle to his friend, "I have an idea in my head."—"Have you?" interposed the friend, with a look of great surprise; "then you shall have my opinion at once: keep it there!"

it may be some time before you get another."
—*Tin Trumpet.*

Colonial Wool.—The Hobart Town Courier observes:—among the late importations to London, we observe the new item of 39 bales of wool from Mauritius. It is time for our sweet-toothed countrymen at home to make beet-root sugar, when the sugar colonies are betaking themselves to the growth of wool instead. For us in Van Dieman's land, we trust that by attention and economy we shall shortly be able to depend on our own native grown honey alone, thanks to Dr. Wilson and Mr. Kermode for the pains they took to introduce the insect amongst us.

Klopstock did not come to live at Ham-burgh till he was past thirty, and the charms which lured him thither were not those of the climate, the situation, the libraries, or the eel-soup, but the charms of a Miss Molly Moller, for whom he deserted his former love, Fanny (immortalized in one of the finest of his odes), on the alleged grounds of indifference to his attentions when with her, and a decided tendency to promiscuous flirtation when he was away.

Malibran.—At the annual concert of Madame Bonnier, the brilliant pianiste, on the 12th ult., there was performed an elaborate composition for two pianos, a harp, and a seraphine, called *Hommage à Madame Malibran*. In the course of the evening, too, a concerto from the airs in *La Sonnambula* was played with extraordinary intensity of effect.

The Sting of the Bee.—Instant relief to the pain which this occasion, is afforded by the application of potash—to touch the part with indigo will have the same effect.

The Crown Prince of Prussia.—As many heirs apparent have done before him, the heir apparent of the Prussian crown was wont in early youth to amuse himself by quizzing his father's confidential servants, and many good stories are related of the jokes which he was in the habit of playing off at Hardenberg's expense. "Can you divine, Hardenberg, what is the first thing I shall do when I am king?" said he once to the chancellor.—"I am confident," replied the premier, it will be something equally honourable to your royal highness and beneficial to the public."—"Right for once, chancellor, for it will be to send you to Spandau!" a fortress in which convicts and other prisoners are detained.

ERRATUM.—At page 263, it is stated that Smollett, the novelist, was born on October 31, 1721, instead of 1781.

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